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Universal Education.

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

American Federation of Labor Convention,

AT PHILADELPHIA, PA., 1892.

BY

Hon. HENRY W. BLAIR,

Ex-U. S. Senator and Present Congressman.



PUBLISHED BY THE

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By Hon. Henry W. Blair, Ex. U. S. Senator and Present Congressman.

Gentlemen of the American Federation of Labor:

Having devoted the larger part of my life to the military and civil service of our country in the special interest of the masses of our people, as I have understood that interest, it is with unfeigned gratification that I respond to the cordial invitation of my long time friend and co-laborer in the same cause, the President of this great Convention, a Convention which represents the rights and hopes of the masses of men as truly as did our fathers when they proclaimed the immortal declaration from this very hall to the listening world, to read to you a brief paper upon the origin, character and object of what has come to be known in the current history of the country as the "Blair Education Bill."

I may be pardoned for introducing here the correspondence which has brought me before you on this occasion :

"AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR,
NEW YORK, Nov. 25, 1892.

Hon. Henry W. Blair:

My Dear Sir—By a reference to the enclosed circular you will note that the American Federation of Labor will hold its Twelfth Annual Convention at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pa., December 12-17.

Our organization, so widely distributed throughout the country, is deeply interested in all questions tending to improve the material and moral conditions of our people, and recognizing in you one of those staunch and true men who have ever been ready with voice and pen to aid in that task, I hereby invite you to read a paper at our Convention on the third day of its session, namely, December 14.

You are aware that the American Federation of Labor at several of its Conventions has endorsed the 'Educational Bill' you had the honor of introducing in the United States Senate. I would therefore suggest that your paper be upon that subject.

I sincerely hope that you will accept the invitation and that you will notify me thereof.

Permit me to take this opportunity of congratulating you upon your election to Congress, under the circumstances. With such an enormous adverse majority in the district, and in view of the almost tidal wave of votes in the opposite direction, your triumph is a compliment of the highest order, a vindication and an answer to the tirade of abuse heaped upon you by a malicious or ignorant press.

Very truly yours,

SAMUEL GOMPERS,
President American Federation of Labor."

"MANCHESTER, N. H., Nov. 29, 1892.

My Dear Sir—Your cordial letter of congratulation upon my recent election to the National House of Representatives is received, and for it and for your letter given to the public in my behalf during the canvass, please accept my sincere thanks.

Our acquaintance, I trust that you will permit me to say our friendship rather, has been constant during the considerable period which has elapsed since the investigation by the Senate Committee on Education and Labor of the relations between labor and capital in 1883, and through all these years of misrepresentation and abuse which have pursued me, and will, no doubt, until I die, in consequence mainly of the part which it was my duty to take as chairman of the committee in compelling a fair hearing for the voice of labor before the committee and by the country against the opposition of hostile interests, you have not failed in manifestations of sympathy, appreciation and support.

It is now seen and admitted that this investigation was the breaking up plow which prepared the way for the great results already realized and for the magnificent harvests yet to be.

Industrial and social problems are now at

the forefront of American politics, where they belong, and they can never be displaced until they are solved and settled, and they cannot be settled until they are settled right. Whatever is at the front in the politics of America must soon take the same place in the politics of the world.

Ideas which were "cranky" then are commonplace now, and we are gratified to see great editors and wise statesmen advocating measures which then excited only their profound contempt. It is the way of the world, however, and there will never be a different way until there is a different world. So let us try to accomplish a little more good in the world, if we are laughed at and ridiculed, and even lied about for our pains by wise men who don't know any better.

Your kind invitation to read a short article before the Federation of Labor on the 14th of December at Philadelphia upon the 'Education Bill' will be complied with if I can possibly find time for its preparation. Thanking you once more,

I am truly yours,

HENRY W BLAIR.

To Samuel Gompers, President American Federation of Labor."

Evolution may develop protoplasm into man, but it is education, the development of the individual soul, which makes the difference between the savage and the sage, and so between barbarism and civilization. And when human beings aspire to the pursuit of happiness and to preserve their liberties by self-government, they find that capacity for enjoyment and ability to control themselves and society depend upon that power which comes from knowledge alone.

Human happiness is founded upon knowledge. Action is the result of impulse or belief, and without knowledge the former is mere brute force and the latter is nothing but superstition. Without knowledge popular government is but anarchy, and despotism is the only hope of an ignorant people. This country has never been a free country except so far as the people have known enough to achieve liberty and to preserve it. Ignorance is slavery and slavery is ignorance. These terms are convertible and each is only a different name for the other. Sometimes slavery is written into the constitutions and laws of a country and sometimes it is not, but it matters little whether an ignorant man is a slave by the statutes of his country. Slavery is a condition and it is the outgrowth of the weakness that is in ignorance, for as knowledge is power so ignorance is impotence. Ignorant men are incapable of organization.

Intelligent men only can combine and union is strength. Organized labor can be-

come so and can remain so only by being intelligent and continuing to be intelligent.

There is to-day in this country and in the world just so much of slavery as there is of ignorance—no more, no less. So it always will be among the masses of men and the nations of the earth. I have always believed that our common school system is the republic. We have and we can have no other all pervading institution which can reach the American child and transform him into an intelligent—that is to say, into a free man. Private and denominational schools may perform a partial work and perform it well, but nothing will shed universal sunshine save only the public school, which can enlighten the head and warm the heart of every growing citizen of our land.

But the necessary and legitimate work of the public school has never yet been fully nor even well performed in the country as a whole; and there is still a vast degree of slavery among the people both North and South.

Before the Civil War there was no system, nor even any general desire for the education of the children of the masses of either race in that part of the country where the negro was enslaved by written laws. On the contrary it was plainly perceived that those who had the power to enslave others must keep all but their own class in ignorance or that universal knowledge would produce universal sovereignty and dissolve their aristocracy in the great ocean of homogeneous democracy.

So ignorance, that is to say slavery, was the general condition in the Southern part of the country.

In the North the contrary spirit was stronger. The masses knew more and were correspondingly more free.

The effort to extend the condition of ignorance and slavery into the territories was made necessary by the nature of things, for an aristocracy is built upon the intelligence of the few and the ignorance of the many, and if intelligence and consequent freedom should dominate the territories, when they became States in the union, and were combined with the old relatively free states, schools and education would everywhere abound and in the end, light and liberty would fill the whole land and all would be free because all would have the power which is in knowledge to seize and maintain their rights.

It must be remembered that ignorant labor is always cheap labor, and an aristocracy, which is nothing but a great monopoly of the rights of the masses in the hands of the few, can never steal the production of the people's toil through the agency of low wages and cheap prices of commodities into which that toil is converted, when the people know enough to prevent it by making and administering the

laws in their own interest and for the general good.

It was more and more apparent as the years of reconstruction, so called, passed away, and is now more apparent than ever to close and patriotic observers, that slavery was only nominally abolished by the war and that nothing could make the people, white and colored at the South free indeed, and remove the evils of ignorance at the North and throughout the whole country, but a national effort to spread and invigorate the common school.

Systems theoretically good had been established in every State, but they were, throughout the South especially, systems only, without vitality, and requiring that infusion of energy which money and enthusiasm alone could impart.

But the Southern States seemed to be wholly under the control of the *Ante bellum* power, and the general destruction of values and the disorganization resulting from the war made it hard to develop an institution which was seen to be a real proclamation of emancipation, which included in its beneficent terms both races and which eradicated slavery and aristocracy and cheap prices and low wages altogether, and distributed wealth and power and liberty among the whole people, where they belong.

It was also found that the common school, as an institution, was deteriorating at the North. 'Alas! it is still deteriorating, as witness the reports of Superintendent Draper of the great State of New York, and the revelations of the census of 1890.

It was found that labor at the South was not accumulating wealth as a result of nominal freedom. The old master class still owned the land and made the laws, and therefore really owned all who labored on the land and were subject to the laws. The suffrage while nominally universal was really to the people at large, only a mass of fuss and feathers, or worse, and the power was still in the hands of the intelligent few who wielded it, as power is always wielded, for the benefit of those who have it.

Considering the burdens of which the land owners and masters were relieved the negro continued to work as cheaply as when in slavery—as a rule, that is for his board and clothes, and that care which preserved him in the condition of a good working animal; and the white laborer at his side must work at the same pay or lose the employment, without which he could not live.

Intelligent Northern labor also saw that unless this system of cheap, because ignorant, labor at the South could be broken up that it would be just as well to compete directly with the cheap labor of Europe as with that of the Southern States, and that protection, which

could come only by educating the Southern laboring man until he knew how to demand and obtain just compensation, was indispensable to the salvation of the higher wages and corresponding civilization of the North. Reduced to the same hours and other conditions it was seen, and is still seen, that agricultural, mechanical and operative labor in the Southern States produces at little more than half the cost to the owner of the product which the same product costs at the North. Capital, quick to see and embrace the opportunity to locate where labor was cheap and raw material on the spot, and where free trade between the States gives unfettered intercourse, was hurrying, as it still is, to take advantage of the same conditions which would exist if our tariffs with foreign countries were all repealed.

The census of 1880 revealed in cold figures a startling condition of ignorance and insufficiency of teachers, school houses and appliances for the education of children, especially in the Southern States.

By that census it appeared that there were sixteen millions of children in the country of school age, of whom six millions were not enrolled, that is to say, did not attend school at all.

Out of the whole sixteen millions there was an average daily attendance during the school terms of less than six millions. Many of the school terms would not be more than two or three months for the entire year. Not over six hundred thousand were enrolled in private schools.

Out of a total population of fifty millions, more than five millions, over ten years of age, could not read, and more than six and one-fourth millions could not write.

It should be remembered that this test is a very low one, and that probably more than ten millions of our people over ten years of age, were and still are not sufficiently educated to enable them to learn and discharge intelligently the duties of citizenship. Two millions of legal voters, or about one in five, could not read and write, of whom nine hundred thousand were white voters and eleven hundred thousand were colored. Not less than four out of ten millions of voters were so imperfectly educated that they could not read the common newspapers of the day intelligently.

For all practical purposes two-fifths of the legal voters could not read intelligently and one-fifth could not read at all.

The Northern States had about two-thirds of the population and one-third of the illiteracy; four-fifths of the taxable property, and the South one-fifth. The colored people were about one-third the Southern population, and the whites owned more than nine-tenths of the property. The Southern white owned

about one-fourth the amount of taxable property that is owned by the citizens of the North, and has at least four times the burden to bear in order to give as good education to the children of the South as is obtained by the children of the North. Less than one-sixth of the money expended to support public schools in the country was expended in the South, where one-third of the children reside, and much of the instruction given was of inferior quality.

In some of the cities there were good schools for a part of the children, but four-fifths of them live in the country, while even in the most favored cities there were great numbers of children for whom no provision at all was made.

A striking fact was and is that greater destitution existed among the children of the poor white people than among the colored children, upon whom Northern charity was almost wholly concentrated. It is surely time that the sympathy of the nation be aroused for these white children, for if they be not educated neither race can rise.

I learned by careful investigation that more white than colored children were suffering for education in the South.

It was ascertained by actual counting of the record of deeds in the county of Winston, Alabama, that seven out of every ten deeds executed by white men, and nine out of every ten by white women, were signed by the mark or X of the grantor.

In his inaugural message of March, 1881, President Garfield said: "The danger which arises from ignorance in the voter can not be denied. It is a danger which lurks and hides in the fountains of power in every State.

"The census has already sounded the alarm in the appalling figures which mark how dangerously high the tide of illiteracy has arisen among our voters and their children. The nation itself is responsible for the extension of the suffrage. For the North and the South alike there is but one remedy. All the constitutional power of the nation and of the States, and all the volunteer forces of the people should be summoned to meet this danger by the saving influence of universal education."

The great problem in American affairs, and in fact in the affairs of mankind, is how to educate, mentally, morally, physically, the children of the country.

In the first Congress of which I was a member, the 44th, in the year 1876, I endeavored to arouse the attention of the people by an extended review of the general subject and an earnest appeal to the country made in the House of Representatives, which was generally circulated among the people.

This speech was entitled "Our Free Schools; Are They in Danger?" and so far as I know was the first serious effort to raise the ques-

tion of popular education in the National Congress, and to meet the emergency that was and still is upon us by substantial aid, when it was necessary, from the national power to be exerted through and in conjunction with the public school systems of the States, when possible, based upon the necessity of intelligence to the general welfare of the whole country and especially upon the necessity of intelligence in the voter who controls the existence and destiny of the nation as well as that of the States.

When I entered the Senate in 1879 I resolved to devote myself to this subject and the kindred one of industrial and social development and elevation, until something definite should be accomplished.

Various suggestions had been made and bills introduced and acted upon in one or the other House of Congress, having in view the establishment of a national fund, the interest whereon should be distributed to the States, but the relief proposed was not appreciable in view of the extent and enormity of the evil, and nothing further was done, and nothing further was proposed until the introduction of the Original Education Bill in 1881, with which my name has since then been associated. I had prepared every phrase of this bill with great care.

This was a proposition to extend and vitalise the common school system by the appropriation of one hundred and twenty millions of dollars, to be distributed to the States in installments during the next ten years and expended through the existing school machinery of the States, upon conditions which should secure the faithful application of the public treasure to the impartial education of all who should attend the public schools, the basis of distribution being the existing necessity as indicated by the census returns of illiteracy from the several States.

No permanent connection of the National Government with the support of the public schools of the States was thought likely to be necessary. It was believed that once the benefits of education being diffused, the people of every locality would forever after maintain them. The bill was therefore properly entitled, "A bill to aid in the establishment and temporary support of common schools."

The States were to decide for themselves whether they would accept or reject the proffered aid, but if accepted it was to be faithfully expended for the benefit of all the children of proper age who should desire to attend the public schools.

The masses of the people North and South comprehended at once the vast significance and saving effect of this bill.

The common people heard it gladly and rallied generally to its support.

Probably no measure ever submitted to them has received such universal approval from the plain people of our country.

During the remaining ten years of my life in the Senate, I did all that I could, and you did all that you could to secure the enactment of this bill into law. Three times it passes the Senate, but it never was possible to secure its consideration by the House of Representatives, except by Committees. Upon its fourth and last consideration by the Senate in the first session of the Fifty-first Congress, the bill failed to pass to its third reading, through the unexpected defection of two of its supposed supporters whose votes with that of the Vice-President would have given the bill its third reading and passage. Thereupon I changed my vote for the purpose of moving a reconsideration in the hope that later in the Session a favorable result might be obtained, but the tariff, and federal election bills intervened and it was never possible again to bring up the education bill. The Congress expired and my connection with the Senate also in March, 1891, and the bill has so far failed to become a law.

Under the pressure of the mighty influences which combat and seek the destruction of the common school system in this country, many public men, originally for the bill, forsook it and fled, and some of them became its most bitter opponents. The same is true of the press. But I trust that those influences, those men and the press, animated by an elevated patriotism, may change. The sum proposed to be distributed by the measure, when last it was under consideration, was \$79,000,000, during a period of eight years, an average of about \$10,000,000—(one-half the River and Harbor bill)—annually, of which about two-thirds would have gone to the Southern States where at present not more than \$18,000,000 or \$20,000,000 are yearly expended among one-third of the children of the country, while at least \$100,000,000 are expended at the North, or two and one-half times as much for each child as in the South.

This makes no allowances for the necessary sum for school houses, for which an immediate expenditure of \$40,000,000 would not fully provide and furnish suitable houses for the accommodation of the school population now unsupplied.

The annual expenditure of the country for pensions is \$165,000,000, and the amount is increasing, more than twice that sum proposed to be expended by the education bill in the whole eight years of its contemplated operation.

During the same period \$160,000,000 will be spent for Rivers and Harbors, or twice that proposed for removing the shoals and quick-sands and rocks and whirlpools of ignorance, and the bars of slavery, from the waters of our national life; and for war in time of peace which but for ignorance of the people would

be impossible at least \$500,000,000 will be expended in this land of the free during the next two National Administrations.

This bill would have elevated the masses of the people of the South to the conditions which prevail at the North; would have removed the competition of Southern cheap labor which hurts the Northern market for labor and production to day more than does the competition of Europe; by increasing the purchasing power of her own people would have created at the South a great market for her increased production without injuring ours; and thus would have blessed the North and South alike, and have made us one great homogenous Nation, wealthy, powerful and free.

The defeat of the education bill was not only a calamity; it was a crime—a crime against humanity.

What would have been our condition now if the education bill had been passed, even if the Force bill for which it was sacrificed had failed, as it did fail; notwithstanding? There is no force but education, and no Force bill but an education bill which can save the suffrage and the civilization of this country.

But I forbear to comment upon recent history further, and leave those who defeated the education bill, Republicans and Democrats, North and South, to their own reflections. I am guiltless of this innocent blood.

We must deal with the future, but let us learn wisdom from the past to guide our way.

It has been claimed that it is better that each locality should take care of itself, and that if let alone it will do so, but this theory has been tried and under it have been developed the evil conditions which we have seen.

The question is between the Nation, the State and the parent on one side, and the helpless child on the other. So far the child has gone to the wall, and in time, when he becomes the parent, the State and the Nation, his child inherits the hard conditions which gave him a poverty stricken, incompetent and helpless sire. Only those who have can give and they declined to give when the education bill failed.

I will trouble you longer only to notice the present condition of education in the country. The tremendous struggles and prolonged discussions which have characterized the twelve years of effort to secure temporary national aid to common schools have greatly aroused the people to the condition of popular education, and to the necessity of greater exertions if the curse of general ignorance is not in the end to overthrow our institutions by placing the balances of power in the hands of ignorant voters who shall be used by public enemies to control elections and so to govern the country.

This much at least has been accomplished, and perhaps after all it will be found that to

have awakened the Nation to its danger was the only necessary thing. The people will find a way to save themselves when the danger is pointed out.

But we are told that schools and intelligence are increasing. So also is popular ignorance increasing, and ignorance, in this country, is increasing faster than intelligence—certainly this is so in many parts of our land.

The New York *Times* has recently shown in an elaborate examination of the census returns, that the public school system is waning at the North.

Mr. George W. Cable, in an article published in the November number of the *Cosmopolitan*, has explained how the "Gentleman governments" of the South are neglecting the education of the multiplying youth of that great section.

True, that school enrollments are increasing, but this country grows in all directions, and ignorance fully holds its own.

In some localities the appropriation of public funds for the construction of school houses is prohibited.

Mr. Cable observes: "Much is to be heard of a gradual increase in the yearly outlays for schools in the South; but the increase in population which it scarcely more than keeps pace with, goes of ten unnoticed. In the four States of North and South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana, in the school year ending 1888, and in Florida and Alabama in 1888-89, the highest increase in the years school outlay per capita of total school population was six and one-half cents, and the average in the six States four cents. At this rate it would take them just seventy years to reach the present per capita outlay of Iowa; but Iowa's increase per capita is over twice as large."

Whether we look at school laws or school statistics, there seems to be no escape for us from the conclusion that a gentleman's government makes for the free school, a rather poor step mother." * * * "It suppresses not illiteracy, but the illiterate." But I must however refer you to the article, for there is no time to quote.

The natural attempt is made to varnish the condition of those sections of the country which most need it, but the decay and deformity and the structural weakness are there, and they are in the North and West as well as in the South.

I have said that I believe that the education of the people will again come under consideration in the halls of Congress, and that I believe that the opposition of former years will not be repeated.

In this connection it must be a source of the greatest satisfaction to every lover of his country to observe the recent action of the leading prelates of the Catholic church in the United States, understood to be approved and prob-

ably inspired by the Pope himself, indicating the withdrawal of opposition to the public school system on the part of the authorities of that great organization.

In the year 1886, I had correspondence with Archbishop Corrigan upon the subject, and in a letter dated May 31st of the year expressed my views upon the school question in a line which will show how free from bigotry have been my utterances in the past in regard to the well-known opposition made by a certain element in the church to the passage of the school bill. It is with special joy that I note the increasing liberality of the church toward our free school system. It is an omen of good to our country and to mankind.

With the anticipated acquiescence and probable co-operation of the Catholic power in this country, the friends of the education bill may well feel assured of its passage in the near future.

I look upon the recent authoritative utterance of the Catholic bishops delivered in New York as a great declaration of progress, indicating the ushering in of a new era of religious toleration and civil freedom in this country—I had almost said among men.

When men of all denominations and creeds and men of no denomination or creed unite in the harmonious support of one great universal comprehensive system of education for all the children of the land, the time is not ages away when intolerance, bigotry, ignorance and superstition will disappear in the pure and holy light of that higher physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual development of human nature, the vision of which inspired the prophets until they broke forth in rapt strains of millenial glory.

I read this letter as a reply to some criticism to which I have myself been subjected, but mainly in the hope that its contents may indicate how free the terms of the education bill and the minds of its supporters have always been from any tendency to narrow sectarian or partisan ends:

[COPY.]

UNITED STATES SENATE,
WASHINGTON, D. C., May 3, 1886.

My Dear Sir—I this morning had the honor to receive your card enclosed to me by mail from New York, for which please accept my thanks, and at the same time excuse the liberty I take by forwarding to you a speech recently made by me upon the measure of temperance reform, which seems to me most radical and necessary to be adopted if the warfare against the evil of alcohol is to be permanently successful.

The great ability and earnest devotion which you have consecrated to the temperance reform, leads me to hope that you will examine these views with care before rejecting them or

denying to them that indispensable support which every successful national movement must receive from the controlling forces of the Catholic church.

I also forward to you with more misgivings but from a sense of duty a copy of the School Bill lately passed by the Senate, now pending in the House of Representatives, together with remarks of my own and data bearing upon this important subject.

The bill has been opposed here with quiet but vigorous efforts by certain leading men and influences in the church, for which I have great personal respect.

While it is no part of my duty to criticise the conscientious work of others in opposition to this all important measure for the general good of all churches and all people without distinction, I cannot ignore the fact of such opposition, nor avoid the expression of my deep regret that it exists.

The Catholic church in modern times must depend upon the increasing intelligence of the people for that increase of its holy influence and beneficial power which I believe to be desired by every liberal, thoughtful and patriotic American citizen.

But the common school is the cradle of our civil institutions.

No power but the state can reach every child and to oppose general common school education or universal provision for such education is to strike directly at the existence of the Republic.

The parochial school can never reach the people at large. No force can destroy nor in the end restrain the common school. The masses of the Catholic church themselves will never permit this to be done.

Let the church advance to the very front of the free and liberal tendencies of the times and by her immense power take a leading if not the leading part in the universal establishment and general support of the common school and thereby permeate that institution with the proper degree of moral and religious training which the religious element of society can so easily supply to it.

The opposite course will certainly shake if not shatter our civil institutions and will inevitably limit the growth and happy influence of that great and venerable organization, to whose spread the American people have no opposition, save only from the fear that it will strike down their free schools. I am a Protestant by birth and education, but I perceive and acknowledge the immense service of the mother church to my country and to mankind. I would die as promptly to secure for her and her most humble membership absolute religious liberty as for my own faith. I write this letter in the earnest hope that active effort may yet be made to assist and not to prevent the passage of this bill proposing temporary

Federal aid to common schools. It is impossible to estimate the good which such a step authoritatively taken would do to the country and to the church. How would the hearts of many millions, now full of prejudice and opposition turn warmly and trustfully to your communion were this to be done. I know that I speak the truth when I say that this, I think, mistaken policy of opposition to free schools which, if continued, will some time result in serious demonstrations, is the only thing which prevents the almost universal expansion of the Catholic church in this country.

The times change and old policies must pass away, for come what will, every child must and will be educated in the free public school.

Let the church do and shape the doing of that which must be done, either with or without us all.

I greatly fear that the expression of these views may be deemed to be uncalled for, but I shall rely upon my knowledge of your high personal character to excuse any impropriety I may have committed, either in thought or expression, by attributing it to a zeal which, however it may lack for knowledge, has at least a worthy motive to justify it. I feel sure that a careful perusal of the bill will demonstrate that it originated in no hostility to the church or to any religious denomination, and that it only aims to secure to those who are without any schools whatever, either public, private or parochial, the means of escape from an ignorance which no earthly agency would otherwise remove.

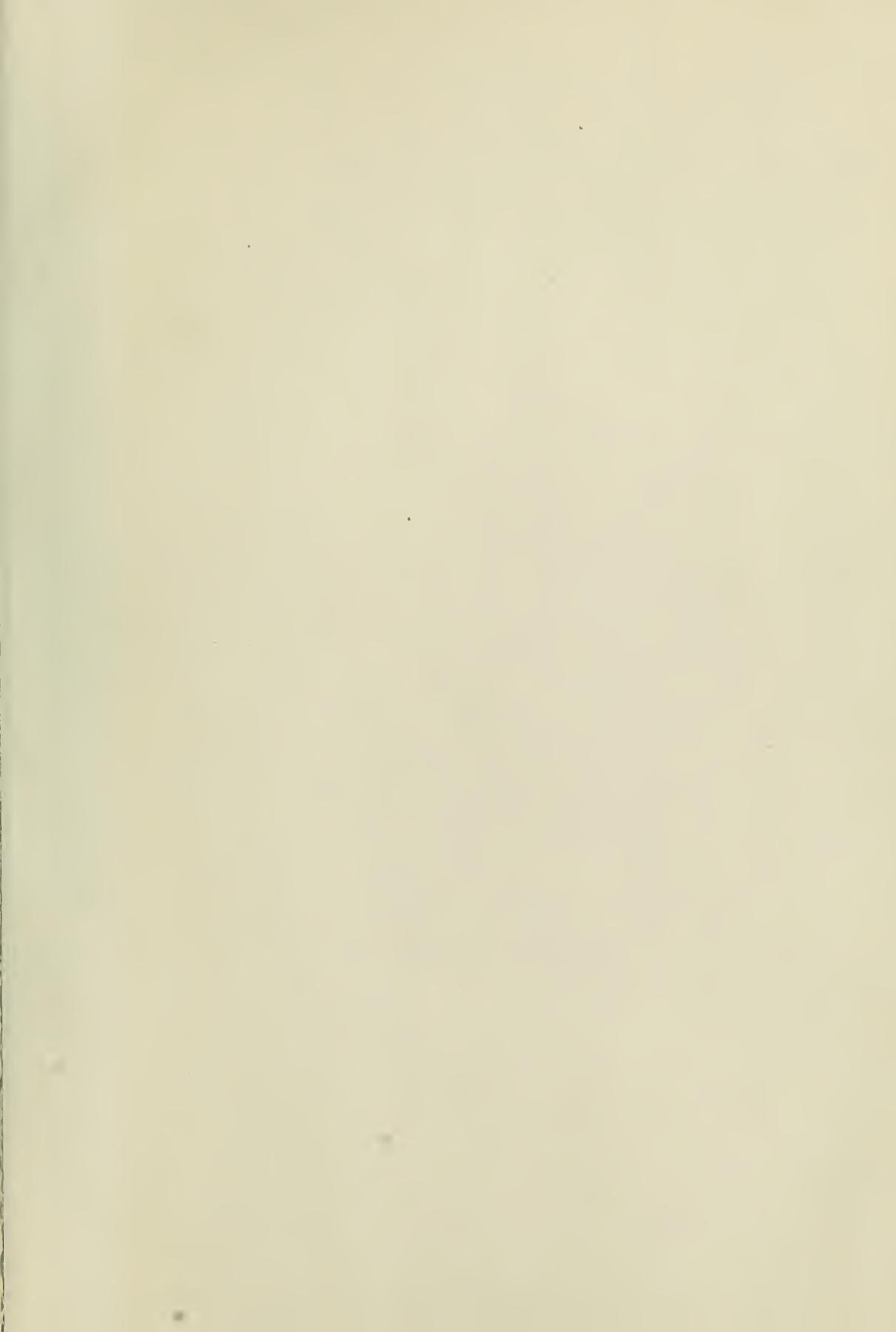
It does not attack a domain already occupied by the church or by anyone else. It seeks to accomplish a good which otherwise will remain undone.

Should an examination of its provisions fail to bear out the truth of my interpretation, I would myself be the first to suggest their modification. With profound respect, your obedient servant,

HENRY W. BLAIR.
Archbishop Corrigan.

Yes, the instinct of self-preservation will compel the American nation to educate its children in order that we may preserve our liberties. No party and no creed can survive a contest with the public schools. I believe that the day is now at hand when those who have opposed the public school system will see a more excellent way. A larger charity, a loftier patriotism, a more comprehensive and all-embracing benevolence is filling and exalting the souls of our people, and beyond and above it all I behold a sublime religious unity and a political equality, fraternity and happiness of which the world has hitherto conceived only in dreams.

Gentlemen of the American Federation of Labor, behold your work! I appeal to you to perform it.









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